

St. Marys Downtown Development Authority (DDA)
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting Minutes for November 18, 2013

The meeting of the St. Marys DDA was called to order by Straight at 8:30 am.

Members Present: Jerry Brandon, Cheri Richter Jim Lomis, John Morrissey, Terry Landreth, and Gary Straight

Members not Present: Charlie Smith

Guest in attendance: Bob Nutter

Staff: Steven S. Crowell, Jr.; Interim Director, Renée Coakley; Executive Assistant

Minutes: The board reviewed the October 14th and 21st, 2013 meeting minutes. The October 14th minutes were approved with a motion by Lomis and a seconded by Landreth. All were in favor of the motion. The October 21st Special Called Meeting Minutes were reviewed and after discussion, it was requested that the last sentence of the St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG) project bullet be removed. Motion to approve the minutes with the last sentence discarded was made by Landreth and seconded by Morrissey. All were in favor.

Treasurers Report: Renée reviewed the financials and motion to approve was made by Richter and seconded by Morrissey. All were in favor.

Additions to the Agenda: Renée added St. Marys Magazine to the agenda.

BUSINESS DISCUSSION:

Team Camden: Renée reported on the Triad conference that Team Camden hosted on November 7th and 8th. The conference had representatives from 19 states and approximately 22 base subcontractors from all over the United States. The speakers addressed sustaining the Triad and the enduring requirements of deterrence. A Triad post meeting will be held on Thursday, November 21st.

St. Marys Intracoastal Gateway (SMIG): Morrissey reported that the committee met last week. At the meeting it was noted that Forum Group, Inc. is working with a potential developer but the information is not currently being shared until something concrete is formed. A small team of SMIG committee members has been created to work with Forum Group, Inc. to be abreast of each step the company is taking on the project. Morrissey also reported that permitting is still ongoing.

Maritime Heritage District (MHD): Richter gave a follow on report of the SMIG property and of the MHD as follows:

- I. The dock has been repaired (CIG Grant \$25K + Tropical Storm Beryl insurance funds):
Revised permit; expected approval in November 2013
 - moved floating (dinghy) dock from west side to east side (complete)
 - repaired dock and added dolphins to accommodate large transient boat up to 72 hours (complete)
 - signage (in process)
 - no commercial activity is permitted on this dock

II. Dock: Proposed concept (DNR has verbally approved); permit yet to be submitted; approval approximately November 2014; there is currently no budget for the work nor is there a cost estimate at this time

- extend dock “T” and relocate and add 2 more dolphins (accommodate 200’ boat)
- 4 floating transient docks
- 2 more floating transient docks + pump-out + electricity

III. Transportation Enhancement Grant (\$300K; \$50K in-kind City) = boardwalk and railing (grant has been approved)

- requires archaeological report and ecology report (approximately \$9,200 of the grant)

IV. Mooring field off of SMIG Dock (future permit)

MHD

- Sunken boats and derelict boats have been removed from Lang west docks and marsh
- Lang docks cleaned / improved (water/power stands somewhat repaired)
- City ordinance has been passed to enforce DNR dock rules/regulations and city docks; enforced by St. Marys Police Department
- Draft 2 (of 4) MHD proposal written and timeline of re-start for the MHD is January 2014
- SPLOST 7: funds designated for boardwalk between Osborne/Ready Streets on St. Marys St. (funds are 2 years off)

MHD-L OVERLAY CONCEPT: The MHD-L Overlay will permit the following additional or expanded uses to the uses contained in the C-1 District as related to maritime heritage activities.

- Museums with nautical themes.
- Shops with items for sale to residents and visitors alike that relate to the history of the City and maritime activities.
- Festivals of a maritime nature separate from existing festivals.
- Shops creating traditional or modern maritime articles on the premises and for sale, such as rope, knots, fishing gear, buoys, maps, etc.
- Shops catering to the boating public such as purser supplies, and general grocery items.
- Vendors for fresh seafood right off the ship.
- Restaurants with outdoor seating overlooking the marsh/water.
- Bait shop.
- Fresh seafood processing and shipping.
- Parks and other recreational facilities – public and private.
- Convenience store for boating and general grocery supplies for boaters.
- Expanded restrooms to include pay showers, and pay laundry facilities.

Richter Proposes DDA takes on a project related to the above:

- 1) Improve waterside appearance of St. Marys Street between Osborne/Ready streets and relocate dumpsters. DNR has jurisdiction over this property
- 2) Begin work on removing center lane on St. Marys Street to allow al-fresco dining

Economic Development Committee: Lomis reported on this committee and the projects that are being completed. The committee is moving toward the three groups, identifying strengths and weaknesses and creating a dashboard of problems with Economic Development in the area. Lomis noted that at the last meeting Smith showed a video of areas in St. Marys that require improvement and suggested that the board view the video in an upcoming meeting. The committee is coming up with a budget for economic development, what tools and incentives are available and target businesses to approach. Lomis questioned the status of a replacement for the Economic Development Director position and the City Manager advised that this item is on hold until the new council is in place in January. A team recently met with the Joint Development Authority (JDA) in regards to the JDA taking over all or a portion of Economic Development efforts for St. Marys. The JDA will present a proposal to the city council after it is approved with the JDA board at their December meeting. The City Manager is working with the Department of Community Affairs to maintain the city's Main Street status until a decision is reached. The City Manager also reported that council will vote on the Redevelopment Powers Act for the City of St. Marys at their council meeting on tonight, November 18th.

Update on Weed Street Property: Morrissey reported that there are currently two different entities interested in using the Weed Street property. Georgia Southern University working with the local school system on Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) projects. The second possibility has Ms. Alex Kearns working with the Georgia Aquarium on this site as a location for maritime environment studies. Morrissey suggested that a representative from each opportunity come speak at a future DDA meeting.

History Trail Park: Morrissey reported on this opportunity of creating a trail for visitors to walk through that will have plaques with information of the city, history, etc. This walking trail will be something extra for visitor's enjoyment when they come to the area.

DDA Golf Cart: The board discussed the \$1500 offer that was received from St. Marys Parts. The board discussed other options of disposition of the property. The City Manager will look into whether or not the DDA can dispose of this item as a gift; transfer of asset or through a city auction/sale. The item was tabled.

St. Marys Magazine Ad: Renée presented the request from Barbra Ryan for the board to renew its advertisement in the January edition of the St. Marys Magazine. The DDA receives a \$1900 full page ad for the price of \$450. Motion to approve the ad as is and for use in the January edition was made by Richter and seconded by Brandon. All were in favor. It was requested that the DDA ad be moved up in the January edition. Renée will make mention of the request to Ms. Ryan.

Straight noted that he would not be able to attend the December meeting because of a prior committee. After discussion, it was agreed to reschedule the December meeting for Monday, December 16th at 8:30 am to be held in the Executive Suite in City Hall.

The Board agreed to invite the representatives interested in the Weed Street property to make a presentation. Morrissey will contact the parties to invite them to the December meeting. The board also discussed a video that has been created by Charlie Smith about the issues/obstacles St. Marys faces in reference to Economic Development. Renée was directed to contact Smith to see if he could show this video at the December DDA board meeting.

DIRECTORS REPORT:

Businesses and Updates: The City Manager reported that at tonight's council meeting the Code Enforcement position will be discussed. With this position filled, some of the Economic Development issues that will be presented in Smith's Video could be addressed more affectively.

The City Manager reported that the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) is still ongoing and is nearing a conclusion point.

The City Manager reported that a Request for Proposal (RFP) is going out for gateway improvements to major entryways in the city, i.e. Spur 40, I95 and St. Marys Road exit. The city is looking at ways of improving these highly visible areas.

The City Manager reported that Aunt B's has closed and he is working with the owner on finding an alternate location in the city.

The City Manager reported that the Enterprise Zone was adopted at the last Council meeting.

The City Manager reported that tourism has addressed the handicap access issues with the Ward Hernandez Building and an estimated completion date for the upgrades is December 18th with a tentative opening date of December 20th.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 9:50 am with a motion by Brandon and seconded by Landreth. All were in favor.

Charlie Smith, Secretary
Prepared by Renée Coakley, Executive Assistant